

# WARRIOR LEADER

Volume 8, Number 3

Operation Warrior Forge

Fort Lewis, Wash.

July 19, 2004



## Weapons 101

Cadets learn about  
the care and feeding  
of machine guns

**INSIDE:**  
SMP/Green To Gold  
MOPPing up at NBC  
FLRC challenges leadership skills  
Doing a bang-up job at the Hand Grenade Range



# Get your career going Green to Gold

By Rebekah Courson

For some cadets at Warrior Forge, this is not the first time they have been immersed in the military life. The Green to Gold Program allows soldiers to leave active duty to attend college, enroll in Army ROTC to earn their degree and be commissioned as second lieutenants.

Cadet Terrance Wilson, a 10th Regiment member from Fort Valley State University is one former Soldier who has taken advantage of this program. Wilson taught middle school science, math and language arts until 2001 when he decided to enlist in the Army.

“I had a wild hair between my toes,” Wilson said. “I enlisted at 26. I already

had a career, I just wanted to be a soldier.”

After serving as an enlisted Soldier for less than three years and rising to the rank of Sergeant, Wilson decided to join ROTC and the Green to Gold Program.

“I wanted more control over my career and to be in a position to help soldiers,” Wilson said.

In April, Wilson was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where he oversaw the clean water facility in downtown Baghdad. He also helped with monitoring diseases in the area. He comes to Warrior Forge after recently returning to the United States.

Cadet Karen Prymula, a 10th Regiment member from the University of Lou-

isville, was on active duty for almost nine years when she decided to join ROTC.

She went Green to Gold to work toward her masters degree, which she completed in May. She intends to begin a doctorate program in the fall.


“I wanted to have a greater impact on day-to-day business in the Army,” Prymula said.

A variety of options are available in the Green to Gold Program. Scholarships are awarded for two, three or four years that include tuition support, additional money for school supplies, a monthly stipend for up to 10 months each school year and a paycheck for attending Warrior Forge. The non-scholarship option pays

only a monthly stipend of up to 10 months each school year and for attending Warrior Forge.

Prymula said one advantage to the program is that it helps create a more well-rounded leader - one who has already done what they will ask their soldiers to do.

“With this program, you’re picking from a pool of people who have a large amount of experience with the Army and already know how the Army works,” she said.

“I would recommend Green to Gold to anyone who wants to be a leader,” Prymula said. “The biggest reason I wanted to do it was I wanted a bigger piece of the pie. I wanted to make things better and impact more lives.” 

## SMP forges enlisted soldiers into officers

By Rebekah Courson

Many cadets at Warrior Forge take advantage of every opportunity to advance their military skills and leadership.

The Simultaneous Membership Program is a volunteer officer-training program that allows Army National Guard or Army Reserve enlisted Soldiers to participate in the advanced ROTC Program. After completing Basic Training, an Army National Guard soldier who is an academic junior can join ROTC and earn a commission as an officer in the U.S. Army upon completion of their college degree.

Cadet Neco Armstrong, a 10th Regiment member from the University of California at Santa Barbara, joined ROTC her freshman year in college and in the fall of 2003 she contracted and her first drill with the Reserves was in January 2004.

She said being in SMP gave her a chance to start networking for after she completed school.

“I want to be in the medical service corps,”

Armstrong said. “They get to know you and in a way I’m a shoo-in with the company. It’s a way for me to get in easier.”

SMP also gives cadets a chance to see what jobs are in the branch and to figure out what position they want as an officer.

Armstrong said one disadvantage of being in SMP are time conflicts. She is a patient advocate at the UCSB Student Health Services, vice president of the Student Health Advisory Committee, and a computer lab monitor, so school keeps her busy.

“My mentors are very understanding, they’re like a family,” Armstrong said. “I have missed a few drills because of exams and they understand. School is the first priority.”

Non-scholarship cadets and Reserve Forces Duty scholarship cadets can join an Army National Guard unit and the SMP. Cadets choosing this option are able to but not required to attend Basic Training.

After completing the ROTC program, the officer

has an eight-year obligation, which can be served in the Reserve Forces, on active duty, or a combination of the two.

Cadets in the SMP are given E-5 pay for their Army National Guard training.

Cadet Alexi Franklin from The Johns Hopkins University, another 10th Regiment member, joined ROTC in September 2001 and the Army Reserves in November of that year. He decided to take advantage of additional training and said he attended Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training in order to be on common ground with the other soldiers and to gain more skills.

“Most people who go into ROTC and then join the Reserves don’t go to Basic or AIT,” Franklin said. “It really depends on when you join and how much time you have.”

He said time conflicts between ROTC and Reserve training was one of the biggest disadvantages to SMP. The additional training, though, helped Franklin receive three Superior Cadet Awards the past three years and the Best Cadet Award in 2004.

# A prayer for life

By Chaplain (Col.) John E. Johnston  
Deputy Warrior Forge Chaplain

Thirty minutes before the Persian Gulf War, Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, operational commander of forces during Desert Storm, turned to Col. David Peterson, his chaplain counterpart, and said, “Dave, come and pray for me, for I am going to send many young men to their deaths.”

Chaplain Peterson went into the general’s office and prayed that the Lord would cause the Iraqis to experience a “fog of battle” in which they would find it impossible to see us and kill us.

I saw an aerial photograph of a massive burial plot in the Middle East that would hold 50,000 dead. Were weapons of mass destruction used, most Americans killed would have their contaminated bodies buried overseas. There were 50,000 body bags at the ready. Two ships, outfitted for refrigeration, prepared to carry 10,000 bodies

each. At Fort Riley, Kansas, the 1st Infantry Division was prepared for massive casualties. No wonder General Schwarzkopf thought so many young men would die!

But millions of people were praying for God to be gracious in His protection of Americans going into battle. Family, friends and service members alike were praying God would protect those in harm’s way.

The war started and the first sorties of planes went in to bomb the enemy. The Iraqis knew we were coming, ready with defensive weapons. After the second wave of sorties had been completed, and none were lost, the entire staff jumped out of their chairs and screamed their heads off!

In “the fog of battle,” the impossible happened. Just over 100 Americans died from deadly fire. A miracle. Are we praying today for God to continue to protect the Allied Forces in harm’s way in Iraq and Afghanistan?

I believe God has angels watching over our men and women. There have been reports of rocket-propelled grenades coming right at Soldiers, and veering at the last sec-

ond to their right or left or even between their legs. One hit a Soldier on his Kevlar helmet and knocked him down - but he recovered to tell the story. Thirty Soldiers in an armored personnel carrier were riddled with bullets bouncing inside, and yet not one of the Soldiers were wounded (See Psalm 91).

More than 850 Soldiers have died and more than 3,600 have been wounded so far in this war on terror; but how many more would have been killed or wounded if God had not protected them by His angels?

It is estimated that 75 percent of Warrior Forge 2004 cadets will, within two years, be in harm’s way. Let us pray now not only for our protection, but for the protection of others as well.

Let us as a nation pray as in II Chronicles 7:14: “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”



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# Cadet's photo career starts right on TIME

By Janey Fassbender

Everyone gets 15 minutes of fame, it is said, and many people wait a long time for that fame to come. With the help of the Army, fame came early in life for 9th Regiment Cadet David Marck, Jr.

Marck grew up as an “Army brat,” so he found joining the Army to be a logical way to earn more money for college. Marck enlisted in the Reserve after his freshman year at the University of Montevallo in Alabama and on a whim he chose photojournalism as his occupational specialty. Marck was assigned to the 314th Press Camp Headquarters in Birmingham. After his second year at school, he was hand-picked for Air Assault School in September, 2001. He was called to serve his country full-time after terrorists commandeered jet liners in their attack on the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001.

Armed with a camera, Marck left his sweetheart, Shelley, and headed to foreign soil. He first deployed to Kuwait, then headed to Afghanistan with a small public affairs team.

helped keep the mood light. He even gained the nickname “Joker,” after the affable, photo-shooting character in Stanley Kubrick’s Vietnam-era film, *Full Metal Jacket*.

In March, 2002, while escorting CNN staffers in Afghanistan’s Shah-e-kot Valley, Marck’s group came under mortar fire. They became separated from the bigger press group and their gear and hooked up with the 101st Airborne. During this time he shot a photo that captured the battle so well that it ended up on



Janey Fassbender

Cadet David Marck, Jr. at Warrior Forge.

deployment made him decide that’s what he wanted to do with his life.

A photographer put him in touch with the photojournalism professor at the University of Georgia and Marck transferred his schooling there when he returned from overseas. The combat environment in Afghanistan made an impact on him. He said he felt like he made a difference — he wanted to be more involved so he decided to further his military career by joining the ROTC program. He is serving in the Simultaneous Membership Program with the 108th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Georgia National Guard.

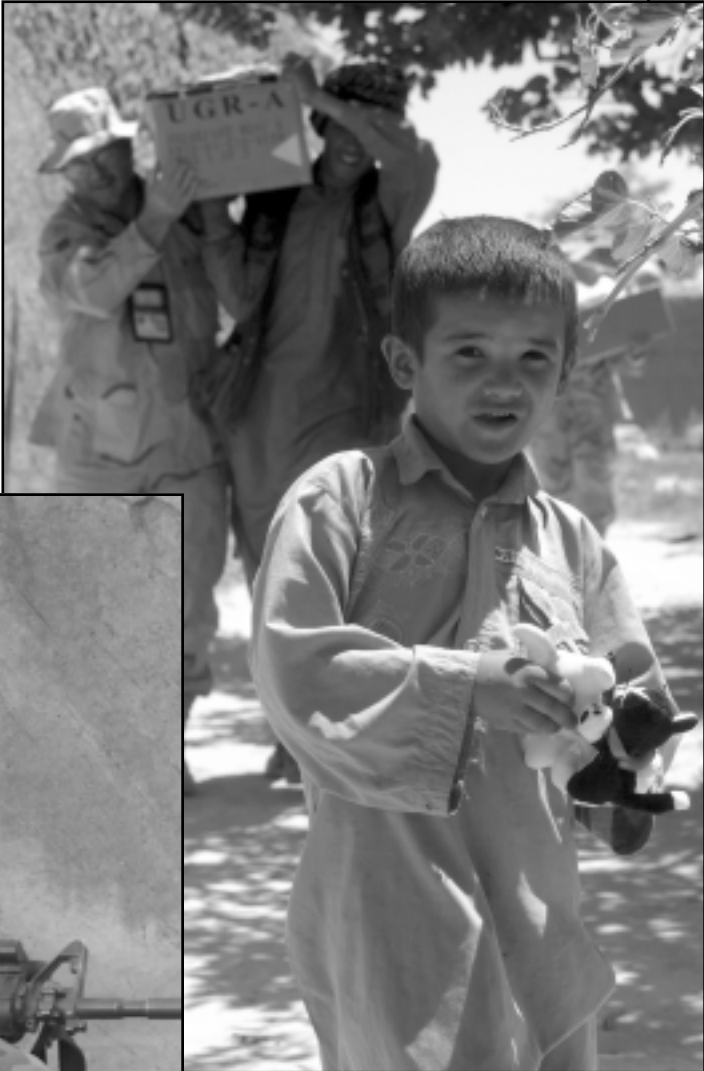
Marck married Shelley a month before coming to Warrior Forge. He has one more year of college left, then hopes to branch as an Armor officer in the Guard. Since his commitment is with the Guard, he plans to stay in Athens, Georgia, where his wife is a middle school special education teacher. He said he wants to “go Armor” so he can do something different than his normal day job – something “hoo-ah” where he can blow stuff up. Leading soldiers interests Marck. His aspires to be a platoon leader and then command a company if the opportunity arises.

For his service in Afghanistan, Marck was promoted to Sergeant and received the Army Commendation Medal



This Marck photo, taken during a battle in Afghanistan’s Shah-e-Kot valley, graced the March 18, 2002 cover of *TIME Magazine*.

Maj. Ignacio Perez, former executive officer for Marck’s unit, found the photographer to have talents in other areas besides photojournalism. “Specialist Marck kept our spirits going with his sense of humor and guitar playing,” said Maj. Perez. Marck’s wit and sarcasm



David Marck, Jr.

Marck captured a moment when this Afghan boy was given what might have been his first-ever stuffed toys.

the March 18th cover of *TIME* magazine. He also used his skills as a soldier to survive the night at 11,000 feet and spent the coldest night of his life taking turns keeping warm under an emergency blanket and walking to keep warm.

After Operation Anaconda in Kandahar, Marck’s commander called him into his office. As he stood at parade

rest, the only thing going through his mind was that he was in trouble. Instead, his commander told him the mind-blowing news that his photos were going to be published in *TIME*.

“It really freaked me out,” recalled Marck. The moment was a pivotal career-boost for him. Being around civilian photojournalists on his

David Marck, Jr.

# Bangin' out the bullets

Reach out and touch someone with an automatic weapon



By 2nd Lt. Stephan Arnold

Al Zdzarsky

Cadet Garret D. Mair of Weber State University steadies his tripod-mounted M-60 Machinegun at the end of the Mad Dog Assault Course.

One of the most heart-pumping training days during Warrior Forge is Day 15, when cadets get to pore over the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon (also know as the SAW) and the hefty M-60. These weapons, used during the patrolling exer-

cise of Warrior Forge 2004, are the U.S. Army's trade tools of combat.

On Day 15, cadets learn how to disassemble and assemble each weapon and how to fire them in a defensive position. They get close

to these weapons as they carry them through the Mad Dog Assault Course.

The excitement of the day's lessons build at the prospect of actually firing the M-249, learning to efficiently wield its power. As their battle buddies help load and feed the ammunition, each of the cadets fire rounds down range with tremendous speed and "potential" accuracy.

"It was amazing to shoot (the M-249) and have ammunition come out so fast," said Cadet Regina Foston of Grambling State University. With each trigger pull, 750 to 1,000 rounds per minute are fired and pound after pound of empty brass shells are expended.

Although firing the SAW is what cadets look forward to, there is more to this training than just firing weapons. Cadets also get a tactical class in which they learn how to set up a defensive perimeter. Cadre run them through training and situations that show each cadet how the automatic weapons are deployed for different situations.

The Mad Dog Assault Course segment of the Automatic Weapons Committee is the most anticipated event of the day. Here, cadets are put into three-person teams and must run through obstacles and set up the M-60 machinegun at the end of the course. Whichever team does it the fastest will receive the



At the ready with the M-249 SAW, Cadet Jeffrey Bess of St. John's University watches downrange as Cadet Matthew Hovde of Central Washington University steadies a belt of ammunition.

2nd Lt. Daniel Psolinos





On the run between obstacles, this cadet packs an M-60 Machinegun to the finish line at the Mad Dog Assault Course.

“This event requires teamwork and a strong mental game,” said Cadet Sean O’Brien of Drexel University. “Performing the steps right is a must.”

O’Brien, Charles Kissing from the University of Florida, and Joshua England from California State–Fullerton, comprised one of the teams from 6th Regiment to compete in the Mad Dog. They all agree that if they were to run through the course again, they could cut their



Cadets get their chance to disassemble and reassemble the M-249 SAW as fast as they can.

time down. Training continues with the disassembly and assembly of the M-249. Here cadets learn how to take apart the weapon and put it back together. After every cadet has run through the process, they also run through a time trial to see how fast they can disassemble and reassemble the lethal SAW. Cadets race furiously to shave seconds off their time.

This committee teaches cadets a lot about both offensive and defensive use of automatic weapons, but it also includes other critical lessons like weapons maintenance and teamwork. According to Foston, being able to take care of your weapon – and to work with others – can help you succeed in any mission.

“Overall the training was beneficial,” Foston said, “because if I am in the environment where the weapons are used, I will have knowledge of what to do in the situation.”



On the firing range is where the cadets have the most fun, firing several hundred rounds of belted ammunition through the U.S. Army’s deadly M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon. Lightweight and having a high rate of fire, the weapon uses the same ammunition as the M-16 rifle.



Cadet Sean O’Brien pulls security while his team moves up to position.



Cadets Charles Kissing from the University of Florida, Joshua England from Cal State – Fullerton, and Sean O’Brien from Drexel University finish up all their tasks on the Mad Dog Assault Course.

# Learning to lob a lethal load: Hand Grenades

Story and photos by  
by 2nd Lt. Daniel Psoinos

Throwing a live hand grenade isn't like throwing, say, a softball. Knowing that you hold a weapon that will kill you - and everyone around you - if you so much as drop it is enough to intimidate anyone. In fact, for some cadets it's the scariest training exercise they'll perform at Warrior Forge. It takes courage to throw a live hand grenade, but for a Soldier at war, that courage is a necessity. The day of training allocated to hand grenades is one of the highlights



Cadet James Perry from Virginia State University steps lightly through the tire obstacle.

of the Warrior Forge experience.

"It is a good day, but it is a tough day," said Lt. Col. Tedson Campagna from Campbell University. "Our mission is to make sure that we can safely train the cadets on the proper employment of hand grenades."

The day begins with a safety briefing and a demonstration of the proper techniques and range procedures in relation to hand grenades. The cadre strictly enforce safety precautions throughout the day.

The cadets go to different stations to practice throwing from the kneeling, standing, and prone positions, while cadre members critique and correct them. Cadets move to the mock bay training area, where they are given instruction on how to properly deploy a live grenade in the live bay. The final stages of the training are the hand grenade assault course and throwing the live grenade.

The hand grenade assault course is an extremely physically-demanding race through numerous obstacles. While high crawling, low crawling, climbing walls and springing through tires, the cadets throw inert grenades at designated targets. They are graded on form as well as accuracy. The cadets crawl through sand and



Army Reserve trainers watch two cadets and evaluate their throwing style as they wind up for the pitch.

barbed wire with a Kevlar vests, coughing and spitting and drenched in sweat.

"Five minutes went by in thirty seconds," said Cadet Clinton Rusch, University of Wisconsin-Madison. "This is the hardest thing we've done since we've been here. It was really rewarding and felt great when I finished by throwing the last grenade in the bunker."

Throwing the live grenade is final event of the day. Anxious cadets wait in line for their turn

to produce the "big boom." Cadets experience what many soldiers fighting the war on terror experience daily, making their training more realistic.

"The hand grenade continues to be relevant and effective weapon," Campagna said, "so we want to make sure the cadets have the confidence in themselves to use it. We also want to make sure that they are willing and able to do everything that their Soldiers are going to do."

## 2nd Louie

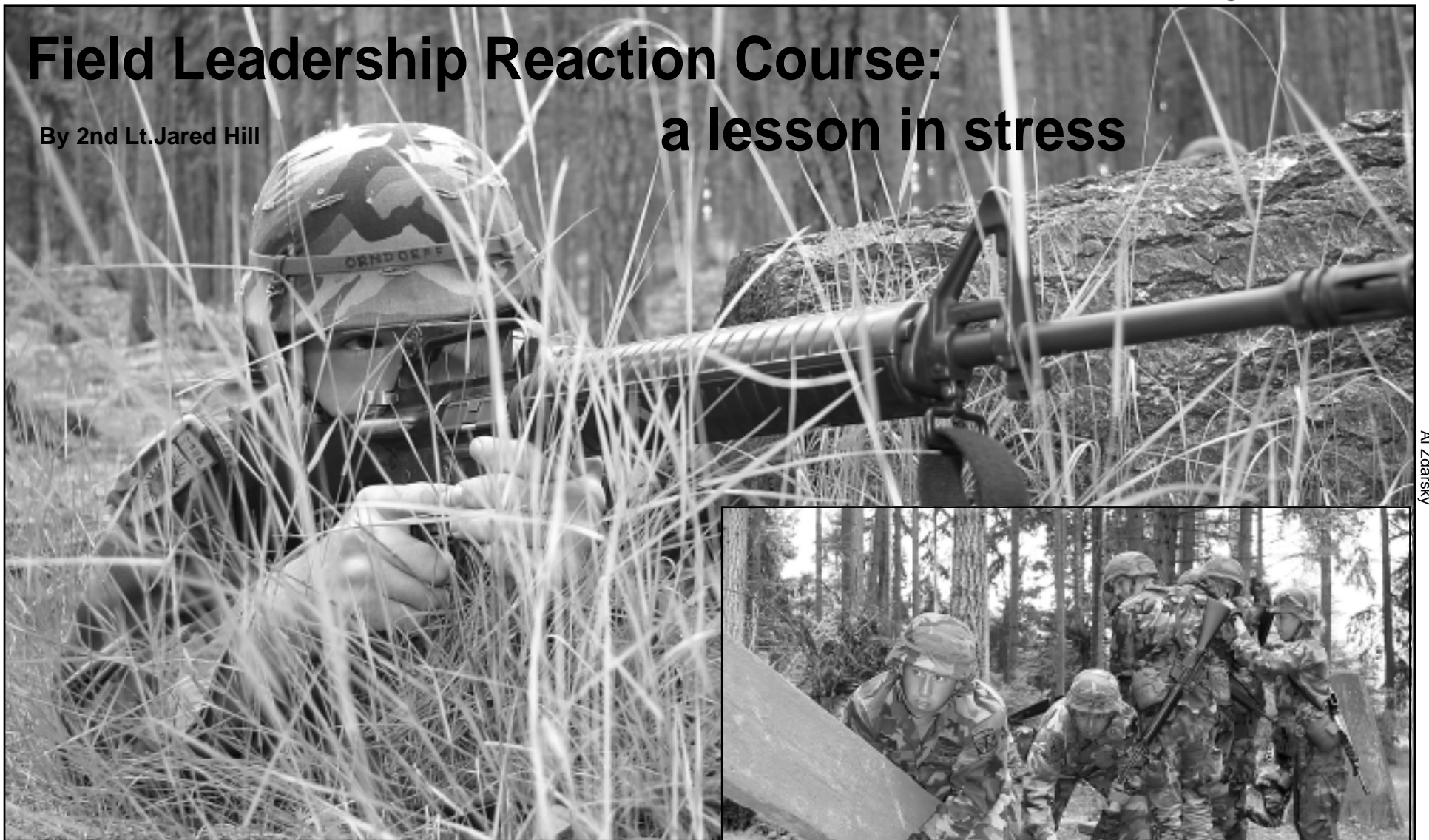
By Bob Rosenburgh





# Field Leadership Reaction Course: a lesson in stress

By 2nd Lt. Jared Hill



Al Zdarsky

Perimeter security is the mission of Cadet Jacob Orndorff, Siena College.

*"All right Cadet, you have only a few minutes to take your squad and a 25-gallon drum across a ravine over a blown out bridge. All you have at your disposal is your troops, your equipment and three long boards. At the same time, you must move tactically and provide security. You must use your troop-leading procedures – and you will be evaluated on your leadership performance."*

Sound stressful? Good, that's how we like it. This is the Field Leadership Reaction Course.

On Days 6 and 7 of Warrior Forge, cadets go through what Lt. Col. David Taylor, Michigan State University, says "ensures cadets can effectively lead their squad in accomplishing a mission." FLRC allows cadre to evaluate and assess cadets, Taylor said.

The FLRC site, just north of the cadet regimental areas, is surrounded by dense forest and consists of two courses with identical lanes. Squads rotate through the lanes with each squad member taking a turn at leading the squad through obstacles to complete the mission. During a cadet's leadership rotation, a lieutenant from the committee evaluates his or her leadership dimensions. This generally constitutes the cadet's first evaluation, if the cadet has not held a garrison position beforehand.



2nd Lt. Douglas Blevins

A high beam tied to a tree is this cadet's ravine-crossing solution.

Stress can run high.

"We use the leadership development process and Army values as a basis to evaluate cadets," Taylor said. "Looking at all the leadership dimensions in that process as a learning tool for the cadets."

Squads also take this time to build as a team in a field environment.

"This is the first time teams are actually out in a field environment going through the standard operating procedures ... to use it as a building block for the remainder of the key events in Warrior Forge, specifically Squad STX and Patrolling," Taylor explained.

Besides the cadets themselves, the key players at FLRC are the regimental staff who are evaluating. Before FLRC started, the cadre went through training for this event.

"The TAC Staff School focused on the leadership development pro-



2nd Lt. Douglas Blevins

Holding a heavy beam in place, Cadet John Intile of the University of Florida-Tampa prepares to pass it back to Cadet Leonel Acoba, University of Nevada.

cess," Taylor said. "That is a very good foundation to have to be able to evaluate and assess the cadets on using the respected leadership dimensions."

Besides the school, the cadre actually went through the lanes themselves, giving them an accurate perspective from which to evaluate cadets.

Second Lt. Vincent Petrucci of the APFT/FLRC committee noted what the lieutenants look for in evaluating a cadet.

"We primarily look for their leadership ability," said Petrucci, who is an FLRC evaluator, "their ability to take charge, communicate, motivate and supervise their squad. Not necessarily toward completion of the obstacle, but definitely completion of the mission."

Cadet Michael Fraas, University of Pittsburg, said the most difficult thing he had to overcome was

uncertainty.

"Going into the lane, I wasn't really sure what to expect," However, his team pressed forward and did the best they could. "There are a couple of things I did learn – first and foremost just have more of a command presence," Fraas said. "What I learned the most was to find a plan and stick with it."

Fraas and the other cadets experiencing FLRC take away valuable knowledge – and advice – for others who face it.

"First, talk to people who have actually done this before and go over some of the things. That is probably your best bet. Second, I didn't realize this was going to be like a squad lane, so get in that mind set; move out tactically, use your one-thirds/two-thirds rule, and always bring a pen and paper."



# ‘Step into our chamber ...’

## Clearing the air about NBC warfare

By Andrew Van Den Hoek  
Photos by Al Zdarsky



No, they are not creatures from an alien world. These are Warrior Forge cadets suited up in MOPP-4, the highest level of protection against an NBC attack. Each wears an M-17A1 Protective mask, protective gloves, boot covers and a two-piece protective suit.

Out of all the tests at Warrior Forge, none is approached more dubiously than the infamous confidence chamber. Throughout the day, accounts of what it’s like to go through the chamber can be heard being passed on from cadets who have been through it before.

They describe how the chamber makes you feel like your lungs and skin are on fire. They say when you get outside the light is blinding, even though your eyes are closed.

Reflecting his experience with it, Cadet Kyle Trottier, from Texas Christian University, said he’ll be a better leader having been through it.

“Today was really good training, I appreciate the cadre and how seriously they took it,” he said.

The process building up to the actual confidence chamber is a progression. Before cadets go through the chamber, they receive instruction on proper wear of the Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear.



It’s not very comfortable in the summer heat when you’re wearing MOPP-4, but the Silent Death Assault Course is a test of stamina.

Many cadets are donning this equipment for the first time.

They also learn how to best react to various kinds of nuclear, biological and chemical attacks and learn to quickly and properly don the protective mask. They also learn how to use M-8 paper to detect and classify various chemical agents.

Cadets then go through the Silent Death assault course in full MOPP level 4, which includes the protective overboots, gloves, pants, jacket, and M-17A1 Protective Mask. The course goes up a steep hill, which is hard enough to ascend without the mask and extra protective clothing.

Throughout the course cadets are stopped at points and told they are encountering certain types of NBC situations. They must then take the correct course of action for that specific situation in order to receive a “Go” on that point.

At the end of the course, each squad’s time and number of No-Go’s are compiled and compared with the other squads in their platoon to determine an overall score. The platoon with the best overall score receives the NBC streamer at the end of the day.

The day closes with the much-anticipated confidence chambers; one contains camphor, the other contains actual chlorobenzylidene Malononitrile gas, a noxious crowd-control agent better known as CS.

Before entering the gas-filled environment, they must go through the camphor chamber. Camphor doesn’t have the same effect as the CS, but cadets can notice the smell of it. CS gas can come in varying degrees of intensity. The kind used in the confidence chamber is a mild form. The CS causes immediate tearing of the eyes and irritation of the skin and mucous membranes.

They enter the CS chamber with their masks on and one by one are told remove them. When the



When the command is “Mask, mask,” the reaction better be fast, fast, and the event is timed, too.

cadre members inside the CS chamber are certain each cadet has breathed in the gas, the cadet is shown to the exit.

“I wasn’t nervous going into the chamber, because I didn’t really know what to expect,” said Cadet Richard Owens, University of Mississippi. “I felt fine until I pulled off the mask. They told me to take two deep breaths, and that’s when it hit me.”

After a few minutes of walking around and flapping their arms to help get the gas off their clothing – the effects of the CS wears off in no time at all – cadets are often found laughing about their confidence chamber experience while they remove their MOPP gear. 